

Young Arsenal Worker Dies of Blast Burns

Authorities at the Kankakee unit of Joliet Arsenal were still attempting today to determine cause of a minor explosion early yesterday which resulted in the death of Carl Berry, 27, of 564 South Greenwood St., Kankakee.

Berry, a World War II veteran and father of two small children, suffered third degree burns about the body, leg injuries, a possible skull fracture and numerous fractures when a tank containing weak nitric acid exploded in the fume recovery building at TNT line number 7, Arsenal officials reported.

THE EXPLOSION which caused only minor damage to the building and a negligible interruption in production on the one line, occurred at 1:25 a.m., according to Capt. Edward McGowan, technical operating officer at Joliet Arsenal.

Berry was rushed to Silver Cross hospital in the plant ambulance but failed to respond to treatment and died nine hours later at 10:30 a.m. He was alone at the tank when the explosion took place. Another man who would have been working with Berry, the latter a new trainee in the work at the Arsenal, was away from the scene talking on a telephone. He had been called to the phone a short time before the blast took place, according to the report from McGowan.

WORKING AT a nearby line when the explosion occurred was Berry's wife, Flora Darlene, 25. She was with her husband at the Joliet hospital most of the morning and when he showed some indication of responding to treatment, started home from the hospital. He succumbed to the injuries before she reached home, however.

Besides his widow, the youth is survived by a daughter, Bonnie, 3, a son, John, 17 months old, and his parents, both of Ottumwa, Ia.

Berry and his family moved to Kankakee three months ago and both he and his wife worked the midnight shift at Joliet Arsenal. They came to this area from Ottumwa, where the body will be sent to the Reece funeral home for services. Berry served in the armed forces in World War II for three years, according to Coroner Willard A. Blood. The inquest is pending.

THE OPERATION of the TNT line affected by the explosion returned to normal today, the Arsenal reported. The investigation to determine the cause of the blast is being carried on by the U. S. Rubber Co., which is the operating contractor, and army personnel at the Arsenal.